run checks, including 'Ultrasonic Flaw Detection Test", on the Railway tracks, particularly during monsoon seasons and areas prone to heavy rainfall, landslides and shifting of land;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that Konkan Railway Corporation had not undertaken the regular checks, including netting of the vulnerable areas, resulting in the recent accident on the Karwar-Ratnagiri Sector; and

(d) if so, what measures are being contemplated to ensure compliance of safety exercises by the Railways for prevention of accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) and (b) Patrolling of Railway Track is carried out in identified sections, in accordance with extant instructions which cover all seasons including monsoon. Ultrasonic Flaw Detection Test is carried out on rails on need based concept, unrelated to season.

(c) No, Sir. Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd. had undertaken regular checks including netting of the vulnerable areas. The site of accident was, however, not considered vulnerable by the Expert Committee.

(d) Railways are continuously striving to prevent accidents and measures, being taken for ensuring compliance, include training of staff, safety awareness campaign, safety drives, monsoon precautions includng. identification of vulnerable spots and monsoon patrolling.

Daitri-Banspani Rail Line

664. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for the inordinate delay in the completion of Daitari Banspani line in Orissa;

(b) the progress of that line as on date;

(c) the target date set for the completion of that line; and

(d) the steps taken to expedite the construction of that line?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) The work is being progressed keeping in view the operational reqirement and availability of resources.

(b) The line from Banspani to Joruli (11 Km) has been completed. The section from Joruli to Keonjhar (48 Km) is nearing completion. On the rest of the section, earthwork, bridgework and other ancillary works are in progress.

(c) The project is likely to be completed during 2004-05.

(d) To expedite completion of the project, part funds have been tied up through the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Beggars in Karnataka Express

665. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that beggar menace in Karnataka Express has increased;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) to (c) Incidents of entry of beggars in trains come to notice from time to time. Regular as well as special checks are conducted by ticket checking staff in association with Railway Protection Force and Government Railway Police to remove such elements from Railway premises. Separate train-wise statistics are not maintained.

SEB's dues to Railways

666. DR. ABRAR AHMED:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the State Electricity Boards who owe huge amount of Railways as on 30th June, 2003;

(b) whether Railways has taken up the matter with State Chief Ministers for clearance of the dues; and

(c) if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) A statement is enclosed. (See below).